

The Virgin Islands Consortium

5 Beaches Not Safe This Weekend, DPNR Warns

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The Department of Planning and Natural Resources said on Friday that five of the 37 beaches it tested between July 3-7, were not safe for swimming and fishing, because they exceeded the established enterococci bacteria threshold considered safe.

The unsafe safe beaches are Columbus Landing, New Fort (Ft. Louise Augusta) and Buccaneer in St. Croix, Brewer's Bay in St. Thomas, and Great Cruz Bay in St. John.

All other beaches were good to go:

St. Thomas: Bolongo Bay, Lindquist, Magen's Bay, Frenchman's Bay, Secret Harbor, Vessup Bay, Water Bay, Bluebeards, Sapphire, Lindbergh Bay, Coki Point, Hull Bay, Morningstar and Limetree.

St. Croix: Cramer Park, Pelican Cove, (Comorant) Rainbow, Chenay Bay, Cane Bay, Stoney Ground, Frederiksted Public Beach, Dorsch, Princess, Condo Row, Shoy's, Halfpenny, Spratt Hall, Protestant Cay and Grapetree Bay.

St. John: Johnson Bay, Cruz Bay, Oppenhiemer and Frank Bay.

High levels of enterococci bacteria and turbidity may be caused by runoff due to heavy rains, heavy marine vessel traffic, high wave activity near the shoreline, irresponsible recreational use, etc. Runoff can consist of sediment, pesticides, animal feces and oil & grease, all of which are harmful to the waters of the territory, says DPNR.

The department, led by Commissioner Dawn L. Henry, says it will continue to monitor these popular swimming areas. DPNR also recommends that residents use their discretion when swimming or fishing at the designated beaches. If the waters appear muddy or murky or have foul odors, do not swim or fish.

For additional information regarding water quality, call the Division of Environmental Protection at 773-1082 in St. Croix.